

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 KINGST 03579 061634Z

ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6117

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 3579

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, JM

SUBJECT: VIOLENCE, APPREHENSION AS "DOUBLE SEVENS" APPROACH

REFERENCE: KINGSTON 3261

1. KINGSTON AND, TO A POSSIBLY LESSER DEGREE, THE REST OF JAMAICA CONTINUED TO BE THE SCENE OF RANDOM VIOLENCE IN THE TWO WEEKS SINCE THE REFERENCED MESSAGE WAS SENT. HOWEVER, OVER THE PAST WEEKEND, THE JAMAICAN PROPENSITY FOR VIOLENCE TOOK A NEW AND TROUBLING TURN. IN KINGSTON ITSELF THERE WERE SEVEN ATTACKS ON POLICE IN THE DEPRESSED ARNETT GARDENS/JONES TOWN/ADMIRAL TOWN AREAS OF THE CITY, THE FIEFDOM OF HOUSING MINISTER TONY SPAULDING. TWO OF THE ATTACKS WERE FAR FROM ORDINARY. ON BOTH SATURDAY AND SUNDAY NIGHTS (JULY 2 AND 3) THE ADMIRAL TOWN POLICE STATION WAS FIRED ON BY SUB-MACHINE GUNS, THE FIRST TIME THAT THIS APPEARS TO HAVE HAPPENED.

2. THIS NEW AND ESCALATED EXAMPLE OF VIOLENCE, WHICH HAD THE ADDED EFFECT OF REMINDING JAMAICANS OF THE THEFT SOME MONTHS AGO OF SUB-MACHINE GUNS FROM JAMAICA DEFENSE FORCE (JDF) ARMORY AT UP PARK CAMP, WOULD BE DISTURBING EVEN IF IT HAD HAPPENED IN ISOLATION. HOWEVER, COMING AS IT DOES IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE STILL-
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 KINGST 03579 061634Z

UNSOLVED DEATH OF WORKS MINISTRY PERMANENT SECRETARY E.A. OGILVIE AND WITH CLEAR EVIDENCE OF UNDIMISHED VIOLENCE ELSEWHERE, IT HAS BEEN MORE THAN NORMALLY DISTURBING. ADDING TO THE GROWING SENSE OF UNEASE HAS BEEN THE CONCERN OF MANY JAMICANS REGARDING A "PROPHECY" ASCRIBED TO MARCUS GARVEY (1887-1940), THE BLACK NATIONALIST WHO WAS DEPORTED FROM THE U.S. IN 1927. ACCORDING

TO THE "PROPHECY", WHEN THE "DOUBLE SEVENS" (I.E., JULY 7 AND 1977) MEET, JAMAICA WILL BE CONFRONTED WITH DISORDER. (IN ITS MOST DRAMATIC VERSION, THE PUTATIVE "PROPHECY" HOLDS THAT WHEN THE "DOUBLE SEVENS" MEET, THE HEAD OF A MANLEY WILL ROLL DOWN KING STREET.)

3. THE SO-CALLED "PROPHECY" HAS NOT BEEN THE SUBJECT OF PUBLIC COMMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT BUT THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT PRECAUTIONS TO FORESTALL TROUBLE HAVE BEEN AND ARE BEING TAKEN TO PREVENT JULY 7 FROM BEING USED BY ANYONE WHO MAY WANT TO EMBARRASS THE GOVERNMENT OR WHO MAY WISH (AS IS THOUGHT OF SOME AMONG THE RASTAFARIANS) TO "PROVE" THE PROPHETIC POWERS OF GARVEY. THIS WEEKEND THERE WAS THE SPECTACLE OF A CONTINGENT FROM THE FIRST BATTALION OF THE JDF IN FULL BATTLE DRESS ASSEMBLING WITH ARMORED CARS IN THE SQUARE AT SAVANNA-LA-MAR; NATIONAL SECURITY MINISTER KEBLE MUNN SAID CANDIDLY AT OUR FOURTH OF JULY RECEPTION THAT THE CONTINGENT HAD BEEN SENT TO SAVANNA-LA-MAR TO EMPHASIZE THE GOVERNMENT'S FIRM INTENTION TO PRESERVE ORDER, AND WITH JULY 7 ONLY A FEW DAYS AWAY, IT WAS THE APPROPRIATE TIME FOR A SHOW OF FORCE. AT THE JULY FOURTH RECEPTION, WE WERE STRUCK BY THE ABSENCE OF SENIOR POLICE OFFICIALS; SINCE THERE IS NO REASON TO THINK THEY WERE UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO STAY AWAY FROM THE RECEPTION, WE CONCLUDE THAT THEY WERE BUSY ELSEWHERE. WE ALSO FIND THAT SOME JDF

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 KINGST 03579 061634Z

OFFICERS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN DETACHED FOR A BRIEF TERM AT JAMAICA HOUSE, THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE.

4. PRIME MINISTER MANLEY HAS CLEARLY DECIDED NOT TO LET THE "PROPHECY" DETER HIM. ON JULY 7, HE PLANS TO SPEAK AT A RALLY TO BE HELD AT MORANT BAY, 32 MILES EAST OF KINGSTON, AND THE TIME SET FOR HIS ADDRESS IS 7:00 P.M. CSMICS WILL DOUBTLESS CLAIM HE HAS LEFT KINGSTON TO ESCAPE ANY POSSIBLE EFFECT OF THE "PROPHECY." HOWEVER, THE SITE OF THE RALLY, WHICH WILL BE THE OPENING FUN IN THE GOVERNMENT'S CAMPAIGN OF CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM (SEE SEPTTEL), IS APPROPRIATE: IT WAS AT MORANT BAY IN 1875 THAT PAUL BOGLE PRECIPITATED A REVOLT AGAINST COLONIAL RULE.

DORRANCE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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